

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method to be executed on a computer system, wherein the computer system includes a processor; and a database, ~~a first input device and an output device~~, and wherein the database includes a plurality of datafiles each containing a plurality of predetermined preferences, the method comprising:

~~receiving signals from the first input device that indicate at least one of a plurality of user preferences;~~

comparing at least a subset of the indicated user preferences against the plurality of datafiles in the database to identify matching datafiles; ~~each matching datafile~~ containing preferences matching at least a first and a second threshold number of the at least a subset of the indicated user preferences, the second threshold number being smaller than the first threshold number;

selecting preferences from the identified matching datafiles, wherein the selected preferences do not match the at least a subset of the indicated user preferences; and

outputting, ~~via the output device~~, the selected preferences.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the preferences comprise at least either artists' names or movie titles.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~the preferences comprise movie titles~~.

the method further comprises compiling a list of preferences not matching the at least a subset of the indicated user preferences, based at least in part on a subset of the identified matching datafiles containing preferences matching at least the first threshold number of the at least a subset of the indicated user preferences, and determining for each non-matching preference of the list, a frequency of occurrences in the identified matching datafiles, and

the selecting comprises selecting preferences based at least in part on the list, in view of the list's preferences' determined frequencies of occurrences in the identified matching datafiles.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~31~~, wherein ~~the computer system further includes a data communications network and a second input device, wherein the processor, database, second input device and the output device are coupled to the network, and wherein the first and second input devices are remotely located from each other.~~

the method further comprises determining for each not matching preference of the list, a frequency of occurrences of the not matching preference in the database, and said selecting is further based on the list's preferences' frequencies of occurrences in other datafiles of the database.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~selecting preferences further comprises:~~ the selecting is further based on frequencies of occurrences of the not matching preferences in at least the identified matching datafiles.

~~— for each non-matching preference in the identified datafiles, determining a number of other preferences in the identified datafiles that match the non-matching preference and assigning the determined number to the preference; and~~

~~— selecting one or more non-matching preferences with the highest assigned numbers.~~

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein the first threshold number is 5.~~

the method further comprises compiling at least a first and a second list of preferences not matching the at least a subset of the indicated user preferences, with the first and second lists of preferences being compiled based at least in part on the identified matching datafiles containing preferences matching at least the first and second threshold numbers of the at least a subset of the user preferences, respectively, and

the selecting is performed based at least in part on the at least first and second lists.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 65, wherein ~~the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein only those unmatching preferences that also appear in 50% or more of the identified data files are selected.~~ the preferences of each of the at least first and second lists are ranked relative to other preferences of the list, and the selecting is based at least in part on weighted ranks of the preferences, the weighted rank of a preference being determined based at least in part on the relative ranks of the preferences in the at least first and second lists.

8. (Previously Canceled, without prejudice)

9. (Currently amended) A method for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the method comprising:

storing a plurality of associated music selections in a database;
receiving signals from an input device that indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

~~determining that~~ identifying a first and a second number of the preferred music selections match with the plurality of associated music selections as being similar to the preferred music selections in the database, based at least in part on a first and a second degree of similarity, the first and second degrees of similarity being different degrees of similarity, the similar associated music selections and the preferred music selections being different music selections;

~~determining selecting~~ a number of unmatched the first and second number of similar associated music selections in the database; and

outputting, via an output device, the ~~unmatched~~ selected associated music selections.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system including a database;

means for storing a plurality of associated music selections in the database;
means for accepting signals from a user input device to indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

means for ~~determining that~~identifying a first and a second number of the ~~preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database~~ as being similar to the preferred music selections, based at least in part on a first and a second degree of similarity, respectively, the first and second degrees of similarity being different degrees of similarity, the similar associated music selections and the preferred music selections being different music selections; and

means for ~~determining~~selecting a number of ~~unmatched~~the first and second similar associated music selections ~~in the database.~~

11. (Previously amended) A method for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the method comprising:

storing pairs of ranked objects in a database;
assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing the ranking number in association with the pair;

receiving signals from an input device that indicate an object;
using a processor to find occurrences of the indicated object in the pairs of ranked objects;

for each pair in which the indicated object occurs, determining a non-matching object in the pair that does not match the indicated object;

ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and

outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises an artist's name.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises a title of a movie.

14. (Previously presented) An apparatus for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the apparatus comprising:

- a processor;
- a database accessible to the processor;
- pairing means for storing pairs of ranked objects in the database;
- ranking means for assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing a given ranking number in association with a given stored pair;
- input means for receiving an indication from a human user that indicates a selected object;
- finding means for finding occurrences of the selected object in the pairs of ranked objects;
- determining means for determining, for each pair, an object in the pair that does not match the selected object;
- ordering means for ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and
- output means for outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

15. (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user computer, the method comprising:

identifying on a remote computer, a first set of objects ~~determined to be of interest to a first user, the first set of objects identified from a plurality of objects determined to be of interest to a community of users and represented by one or more data structures;~~

using a processor to access the one or more data structures representing a plurality of objects of interest to a community, to identify at least a first and a second ~~one~~ set of objects having respectively at least a first and a second threshold of similarities in common with the first set of objects, the first and second thresholds being different thresholds;

generating a combined set of objects from the identified at least first and second ~~one~~ sets of objects; and

transmitting to the user computer, the combined set of objects.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein ~~a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure~~ the generating is further based on frequencies of occurrences of the objects of the combined set represented in the data structures having the at least first and second thresholds of similarities.

17. (Previously p) The method of claim 15, wherein the objects comprise a plurality of digital audio selections.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein ~~the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.~~ the generating is further based on frequencies of occurrences of the objects of the combined set represented in the data structures.

19. (Previously Canceled, without prejudice)

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein ~~accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one set of objects comprises accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one set of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects~~ the objects of each of the at least first and second set are ranked relative to other objects of the list, and the selecting is based at least in part on weighted ranks of the objects, the weighted rank of an object being determined based at least in part on the relative ranks of the objects in the at least first and second lists.

21-24. (Previously Canceled, without prejudice)

25. (Currently amended) A machine readable medium having stored thereon machine executable instructions, which when executed operate to implement a method comprising:

identifying a first set of objects determined to be of interest to a first user, ~~the first set of objects identified from a plurality of objects determined to be of interest to a community of users and represented by one or more data structures;~~

accessing ~~the one or more data structures~~ representing a plurality of objects of interest to a community, to identify at least ~~one~~ a first and a second set of objects having respectively at least a first and second threshold of similarities in common with the first set of objects, the first and second thresholds being different thresholds;

generating a combined set of objects from the identified at least first and second ~~one~~ sets of objects; and

displaying the combined set of objects.

26. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein ~~a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure~~ the generating is further based on frequencies of occurrences of the objects of the combined set represented in the data structures having the at least first and second thresholds of similarities.

27. (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein said objects comprise a plurality of digital audio selections.

28. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein ~~the first set of objects are identified based upon user input~~ the generating is further based on frequencies of occurrences of the objects of the combined set represented in the data structure having the at least first and second thresholds of similarities.

29. (Previously Canceled, without prejudice)

30. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein ~~accessing the one or more data structures comprises accessing the one or more data structures to identify at least one set of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects~~ the objects of each of the at least first and second set are ranked relative to other objects of the list, and the selecting is based at least in part on weighted ranks of the objects, the weighted rank of an object being determined based at least in part on the relative ranks of the objects in the at least first and second lists.

31-35. (Previously Canceled, without prejudice)

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein ~~determining that said~~
~~identifying a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music~~
~~selections in the database comprises determining that a number of preferred digital~~
~~audio music titles match~~ identifying a first and a second number of digital audio music
titles stored in the database, as being similar to a number of preferred digital audio
music titles, based at least in part on a first and a second degree of similarity.

37. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 10, further comprising means for
outputting the ~~unmatched~~ selected associated music selections.

38. (Currently amended) The ~~apparatus~~ method of claim 14, wherein the
recommended objects comprise artists' names.

39.-41. (Cancelled, without prejudice).

42. (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access
to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user, the method
comprising:

generating on a remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of
objects known to be of interest to a community of users;

identifying a first set of objects that are known to be of interest to a first user;

using a processor to access the data structure to identify at least ~~one~~ a first and
a second set of objects having respectively at least a first and a second threshold of
similarities in common with the first set of objects, the first and second thresholds being
different thresholds; and

providing to a user computer, at least a subset of the at least first and second ~~one~~
~~sets~~ of objects.

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein ~~accessing the data structure~~
~~to identify at least one set of objects comprises accessing the data structure to identify~~

~~at least one set of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects~~ the providing is based at least in part on frequencies of occurrences of the first and second sets of objects in at least the data.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 42, wherein the objects comprise a plurality of digital audio selections.

45. (New) A program product comprising a plurality of programming instructions adapted to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to practice the method of claim 1.

46. (New) A program product comprising a plurality of programming instructions adapted to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to practice the method of claim 9.

47. (New) A program product comprising a plurality of programming instructions adapted to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to practice the method of claim 15.

48. (New) A program product comprising a plurality of programming instructions adapted to program an apparatus to enable the apparatus to practice the method of claim 42.